



# THE FUTURE is URBAN





# WE HAVE BECOME AN URBAN SPECIES

**For the first time in history, the majority of the world's population resides in cities. And by 2050, more than 75 percent of us will call cities home.**

SPUR works to make the major cities of the Bay Area as livable and sustainable as possible. Great urban places, like San Francisco's Dolores Park playground, bring people together from all walks of life.



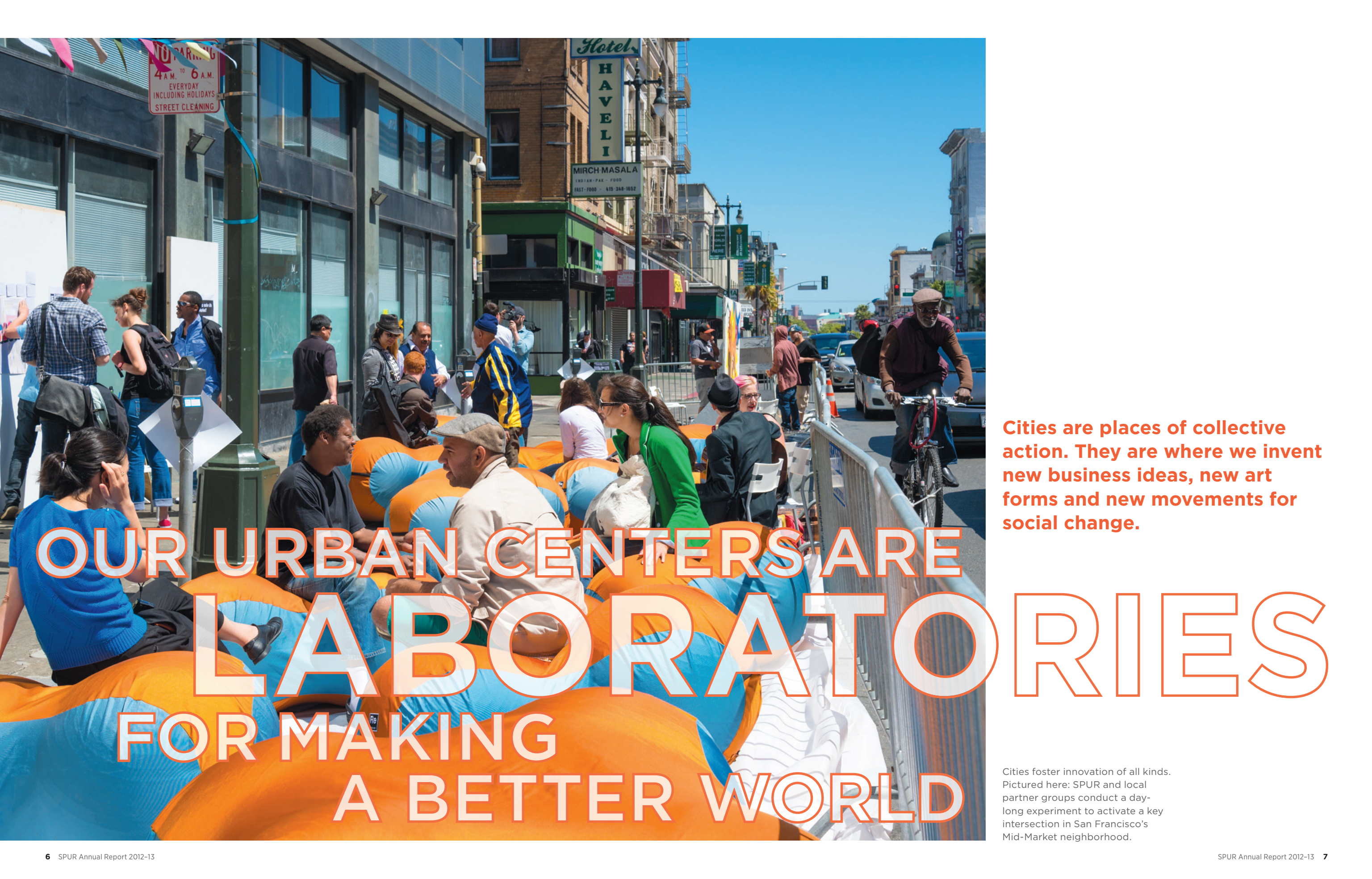


# THE WAY WE MAKE AND REMAKE OUR CITIES WILL DEFINE OUR FUTURE

**It will determine our access to economic opportunity, our impact on the planetary climate — and the climate's impact on us. If we organize them the right way, cities can become the solution to the problems of our time.**

We are hard at work retrofitting our transportation infrastructure to support the needs of tomorrow. Shown here: the new Transbay Transit Center, now under construction.






# OUR URBAN CENTERS ARE LABORATORIES FOR MAKING A BETTER WORLD

Cities are places of collective action. They are where we invent new business ideas, new art forms and new movements for social change.

Cities foster innovation of all kinds. Pictured here: SPUR and local partner groups conduct a day-long experiment to activate a key intersection in San Francisco's Mid-Market neighborhood.





# THE BAY AREA IS THE IDEAL PLACE TO SOLVE THE BIG PROBLEMS

**We have the resources, the diversity of perspectives and the civic values to pioneer a new model for the American city — one that moves toward carbon neutrality while embracing a shared prosperity.**

San Jose City Hall reflects the innovation culture of Silicon Valley and the city's forward-thinking 2040 Plan. SPUR is working closely with San Jose on its vision to retrofit low-density, suburban neighborhoods for a more prosperous and sustainable future.





# HELP US INVENT THE FUTURE

SPUR

URBANCENTER

Since 1910, SPUR has been bringing people together to generate ideas and action for a better city. Join us.

With more than 200 public events and exhibitions each year, SPUR invites Bay Area residents to get involved in the processes that shape our region's future.



# SPUR San Jose

## Year One Kicks Off

### Our first year of work in San Jose brought together a robust community of South Bay urbanists.

We launched public programs and built partnerships with local organizations. We weighed in on local planning issues and made our first policy recommendations. And, most significantly, we started three long-range policy initiatives to shape the future of San Jose and the South Bay.

**According to the Association of Bay Area Governments, San Jose will add more new residents in the coming decades than any other city in the region.**

The shape that growth takes will help determine the sustainability, livability and economic vitality of the entire Bay Area. San Jose faces a particular set of challenges — shared by many American cities — as it considers how to retool environments that were built for the automobile in order to support walking, cycling and transit. The conversations and projects we initiated this year address this goal from many angles.



### Creating Great Places

Envision San Jose 2040, the city's ambitious new general plan, calls for 470,000 new jobs and 120,000 new housing units over the next 30 years. The plan also reimagines the city's suburban landscape as walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods that provide services close to homes, jobs and transit. In support of Envision San Jose, SPUR's Urban Design Task Force launched a policy initiative to:

- Identify what stands in the way of creating excellent, walkable urban places
- Rethink policies and practices that were developed in a car-friendly era
- Recommend policy changes that will improve urban design outcomes

### Rethinking Downtown

We kicked off our policy work on the future of downtown San Jose with an article in *The Urbanist* exploring the history of downtown and the forces that have undermined its position over time. Next we began developing policy recommendations to:

- Fill downtown's streets and buildings with

- people, investment and activity
- Build on downtown's investment in urban design and transportation infrastructure
- Strengthen downtown as both a central business district and hub for arts, culture, entertainment and living

### Setting a Transportation Agenda

Santa Clara County's automobile dependency comes at increasing social and environmental costs, and a growing percentage of residents are frustrated with their transportation options. After a series of workshops to identify challenges, SPUR introduced a policy initiative to:

- Work with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority to improve transit services and create new transportation solutions
- Build public demand for a more urban, car-optional environment
- Recommend new policies, tools and technology to support this shift
- Take strategic advantage of the \$10 billion in transit investment that will come from BART's expansion to San Jose, plans for bus rapid transit and the electrification of Caltrain



**In early 2012, more than 500 urbanists joined us at San Pedro Market Square to celebrate the opening of SPUR San Jose.**

### Policy Impacts in 2012-13

In our first year, SPUR shaped debates and influenced policy decisions. We:

- Relaunched the Urban Catalyst Team, a group of downtown business and government leaders, to help implement downtown revitalization
- Supported the extension of the high-rise incentive program, which encourages dense housing development downtown
- Developed strategies to strengthen new planning code requirements for development projects, suggesting policy tools that would help reduce dependence on driving
- Successfully advocated to locate a bus rapid transit station in front of city hall to improve connectivity and demonstrate San Jose's commitment to transit
- Improved the design of planned bus rapid transit stations downtown to integrate them with the streetscape and make them more welcoming and functional



### Building Community: Public Programs at SPUR San Jose

**Kick off date: May 2012**

**Number of programs in our first year: 50**

**Number of participants: 1,500+**

#### Highlights

- Our launch party at San Pedro Market Square (pictured above)
- Biking and walking tours with city leaders
- Talks by prominent design and planning authors
- Forums on:
  - urban design
  - social networks and transportation
  - high-speed rail
  - employer shuttles
  - high-rise urbanism
  - urban amenities for suburban campuses
  - and much, much more

#### Venue and Program Partners

During our first year, with no permanent venue in San Jose, we relied on dozens of partner organizations to host and co-sponsor our events. Our heartfelt thanks to:

Adobe  
AIA Santa Clara Valley  
American Planning Association, California Chapter Northern  
Camera 12 Cinemas  
Certificate in Real Estate Development Program, San Jose State University  
City of San Jose  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library  
Greenbelt Alliance  
Heritage Bank of Commerce  
Island Press  
Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana (MACLA)  
PechaKucha San Jose  
San Jose Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio  
San Jose Downtown Association  
San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art  
San Jose Museum of Art  
San Jose Repertory Theatre  
San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce  
San Jose State University  
San Jose State University Urban Planning Coalition  
San Pedro Square Market  
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition  
Silicon Valley Creates, formerly known as 1stACT Silicon Valley  
URS Corporation  
TransForm  
ZERO1 Garage



# Community Planning

Our goal: Build great neighborhoods.

<http://www.spur.org/centralcorridor>

<http://www.spur.org/urbandesignlessons>

<http://www.spur.org/takedown280>

<http://www.spur.org/sfwaterfront>



## A New Jobs District for San Francisco

San Francisco has made substantial transportation investments in the Central Corridor neighborhood in recent years. The \$1.6 billion Central Subway project will add to existing transit services such as the 4th and King Caltrain station, the N Judah Muni line and many frequent local buses.

All of this makes the Central Corridor the ideal place to locate new jobs and housing. In early 2013, the San Francisco Planning Department released a draft of the Central Corridor Plan, a multi-year effort to update zoning and encourage new development. While the plan is a great step in the right direction,

it doesn't go far enough in concentrating housing and especially jobs in this transit-rich location — one of the key areas in San Francisco, and the region, where going big makes sense. SPUR continues to advocate for higher-density jobs and housing in the parts of this plan area that are closest to transit.



## San Jose: A City of Urban Villages

In late 2011, San Jose adopted an ambitious new general plan to guide the city's evolution into a more urban, transit-oriented and livable place. The plan seeks to channel growth into designated areas along major corridors, including 70 "urban villages" — dense, walkable hubs with a mix of jobs, retail and housing. The city is now embarking on an urban-village planning process to translate the general plan's development targets into great urban places that enhance San Jose's neighborhoods and the city at large. SPUR is working with city leadership to help shape the urban-village planning process and identify policies and design principles that support the laudable goals of the general plan.

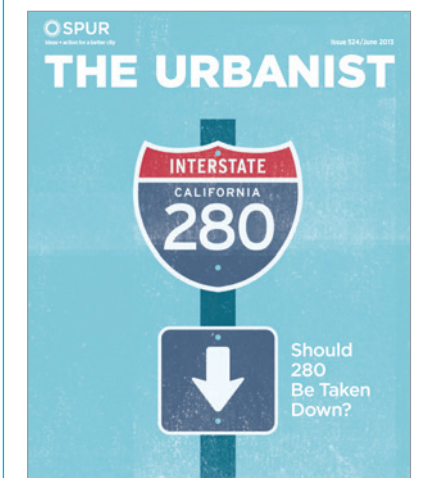


## Transforming the SF Waterfront

In recent decades, San Francisco's waterfront has been home to some of the city's most transformative projects, including Mission Bay, AT&T Park, China Basin and the South Beach neighborhood. Today the waterfront is once again where many of the city's largest and most exciting development proposals are taking shape, including Seawall Lot 337/Pier 48 (also known as Mission Rock), Pier 70 and the Warriors' stadium. At the same time, the Port of San Francisco and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) are initiating a series of planning studies to look at the open space system between Fisherman's Wharf and China Basin Channel. These studies will include the future locations of several open water basins, which will provide public access to the water. SPUR will continue to work with the port and BCDC to help make our waterfront more accessible to everyone.

## Taking Down I-280

After the Embarcadero and Central freeways were severely damaged in the Loma Prieta earthquake, San Francisco took a tragic situation and turned it into a great urban planning success story: the creation of the Embarcadero and Octavia Boulevard. San Francisco now has another opportunity to take down a freeway while creating major transportation infrastructure improvements in an important area of the city. Currently, the stub end of Interstate 280 creates a barrier between the developing Mission Bay neighborhood and Potrero Hill. At the same time, the 19-acre Caltrain rail yard forms a barrier between Mission Bay and SoMa. SPUR released a report showing how these challenges can be addressed with a few dramatic moves that could transform this divided part of the city while generating funding for several key regional transit projects, including high-speed rail and the extension of Caltrain into downtown San Francisco.





# Disaster Planning

Our goal: Make our cities resilient in a major earthquake.

- <http://www.spur.org/retrofitlaw>
- <http://www.spur.org/onsolidground>
- <http://www.spur.org/resilientcity>
- <http://www.spur.org/disasterplanning>



## Big Win

## SF Passes Earthquake Retrofit Law

In early 2013, San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee signed the mandatory soft-story retrofit program into law. SPUR has long advocated for this legislation, which requires upgrades to many of the city’s soft-story buildings, those with large ground-floor openings that

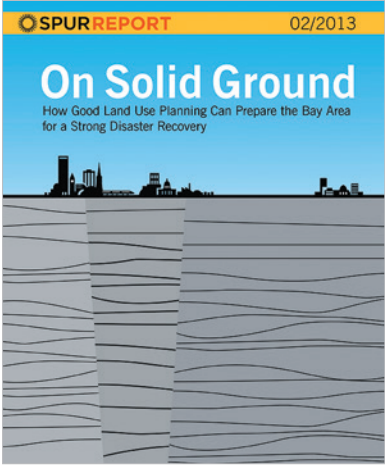
make them vulnerable to damage or even collapse in an earthquake. An estimated 2,800 buildings — home to roughly 58,000 people and 2,000 businesses — have soft-story conditions. The city estimates that between 43 and 85 percent of them would be tagged as

“unsafe” after a magnitude 7.2 earthquake on the San Andreas Fault, and a quarter of those would be expected to collapse. The new retrofit law is a huge win for SPUR, the result of many years of dedicated advocacy to help make San Francisco more resilient in a major earthquake.



## Putting the Bay Area on Solid Ground

When a major earthquake strikes the Bay Area, it could take months to re-establish essential services and years to rebuild. Successful recovery will depend on whether or not we make good land use planning decisions now. Cities that lay the groundwork for rebuilding — by continuously updating their general plans and zoning codes before a major disaster — will be in a much better place to begin a conversation with residents about a recovery vision. And by making regulatory changes now, governments will have the tools they need to facilitate recovery. SPUR’s latest Resilient City report, *On Solid Ground*, provided recommendations for work to be done before the next earthquake occurs, as well as important steps to take afterward as we begin to rebuild.



## Lifelines to a Resilient City

In 2009, San Francisco followed a recommendation from SPUR’s Resilient City initiative and convened a Lifelines Council to explore what steps need to be taken to strengthen the city’s crucial “lifeline” systems — water, power, transportation and communications — so that they perform well in an earthquake. In 2012, the Lifelines Council continued to study the interdependence among different lifelines in order to expedite response and recovery after an earthquake. This interdependency study is scheduled to be completed in late 2013.



## A Plan to Make San Francisco Safer

This year San Francisco adopted an update to the community safety element of the city’s general plan. The policies in this element of the general plan aim to facilitate community resilience and encourage programs that will help us prepare for and recover from a major earthquake. Many of the ideas from SPUR’s Resilient City reports made their way into the update, most notably our concept of “resilience” — that is, a city’s ability to recover from a major earthquake.



# Economic Development

Our goal: Lay the foundations of economic prosperity — for everyone.

<http://www.spur.org/businessstax>

<http://www.spur.org/hollywoodsilicon>

<http://www.spur.org/sharingeconomy>

<http://www.spur.org/economicdevelopment>



## Big Win SF Passes Business Tax Reform

For years SPUR, the San Francisco business community and others argued that the city's payroll tax deterred job growth and should be changed. Finally, in November 2012, San Francisco voters approved a major restructuring of the city's business tax. The new measure

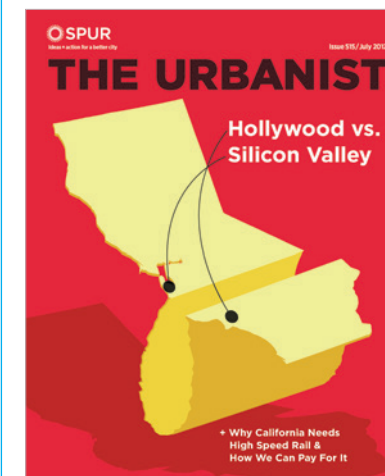
replaces San Francisco's payroll tax with a gross receipts tax, a more common and more stable tax structure found in cities throughout California. In addition to replacing a tax on job creation with a tax on overall revenues, the measure lowers taxes for many by broadening the number

and kind of businesses that pay the tax. The careful crafting of the measure by a broad coalition, including SPUR, resulted in a tax that still generates significant local revenue but does so in a less economically harmful way.



## Hollywood vs. Silicon Valley: Integrating Two Economic Clusters

SPUR made a new case for the economic benefit of high-speed rail in California by arguing that the trains will not only link major urban centers throughout the state, they will also specifically connect Silicon Valley and Hollywood — two iconic economic brands. While previously distinct economically, the entertainment and technology industries are converging. Connecting the two regions via high-speed rail could further strengthen this convergence — and its economic benefit. SPUR published this research (and a related report on how California could pay for high-speed rail without any additional federal support) and presented it at a national seminar held by America 2050.



## Investing in the Future Workforce

Upgrading the skills of the Bay Area workforce is a key to making the region competitive in the national and international economies. This year, recognizing the need to approach skills and workforce development from a regional perspective, SPUR kicked off a major initiative focused on finding better pathways to move low- and moderate-wage Bay Area workers into middle-income and middle-skill jobs. The project brings together stakeholders from government, business, labor, community groups, transportation, workforce development and other fields to produce an economic development strategy for the Bay Area that has support from leaders across the region.



## The Sharing Economy Booms

For well over a decade, SPUR has been a proponent of services that allow people to share resources for both environmental and economic benefit. The past few years have seen a major rise in the “sharing economy” and “collaborative consumption,” terms that describe this growing phenomenon. In 2012, as companies like Airbnb (house sharing), Uber and Lyft (ride sharing) gained currency, the conversation turned to whether these businesses can, or should, conform to existing regulations, including the hotel tax and taxi licensing rules. SPUR took a lead role in making the case for a new policy agenda that would rethink outdated regulations and support the growth of the sharing economy.



# Good Government

Our goal: Support local government.

- <http://www.spur.org/parksbond>
- <http://www.spur.org/voterguide2013>
- <http://www.spur.org/ggawards2013>
- <http://www.spur.org/goodgovernment>



## Big Win SF Voters Pass Parks Bond

More than 72 percent of San Francisco voters supported Prop. B on the November 2012 ballot, the third in a series of parks bonds to help the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department rectify years of deferred maintenance driven by budget reductions. Funding for city parks and open spaces has long been an important part of the SPUR agenda. Our 2011 *Seeking Green* report identified funding strategies to keep San Francisco parks open and maintain facilities built or renovated with bond funds. While SPUR supported this one-time bond, we hope the department's next effort will be a more permanent solution to its \$30 million annual operating deficit.



## Celebrating Good Government

SPUR's annual Good Government Awards recognize City of San Francisco employees whose exceptional performance has made them models for other agencies and cities around the country. The 2013 ceremony honored Ted Egan of the Controller's Office, Jaime Flores-Lovo of the Department of Public Works, Lea Militello of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, Michelle Ruggels of the Department of Public Health, and the San Francisco Police Department's Crime Data Warehouse Team.



## Early Results: Ballot Reform Is Working

San Francisco's notoriously long local ballots have gotten a little shorter in recent years. In three of the last four elections, there were between five and eight local measures. By comparison, ballots from 2000 to 2008 had between nine and 22 measures each election. The change is partially the product of a 2007 charter amendment that SPUR sponsored after the November 2006 election, when seven measures were placed on the ballot the day before it was finalized — without public hearing, analysis or review. SPUR built a coalition to reform the ballot process by requiring the mayor or Board of Supervisors to introduce measures earlier in the process. This small change has led to a reduction in local measures, particularly those that involve ordinances and policy declarations that could be passed by the board. We don't know what future ballots will hold, but we are cautiously optimistic that supervisors will pass laws on issues they can control and spare voters the chore of wading through dozens of complex issues.



## Getting Out the Vote

Every election, SPUR empowers San Francisco voters with in-depth analysis of local measures by our Ballot Analysis Committee and Board of Directors. We researched, analyzed and debated nine local measures in 2012, two in June and seven in November. At the fall ballot box, voters supported our endorsements across the board, including several issues core to SPUR's agenda: reform of the city's business tax and bonds for affordable housing and parks.





# Housing

Our goal: Make it affordable to live here.

- <http://www.spur.org/housingtrustfund>
- <http://www.spur.org/buildingboom>
- <http://www.spur.org/projectreview>
- <http://www.spur.org/housing>



## Big Win

### Voters Secure Funds for Affordable Housing

After a year of work by SPUR and other housing advocates, San Francisco voters approved the Housing Trust Fund in November 2012. This measure provides a permanent source of funding for affordable housing, encourages the creation of moderate-income housing and stimulates the production of market-rate housing. Over 30 years, the Housing Trust Fund will generate more than \$1.2 billion for affordable housing for very low- and extremely low-income households. At the same time, the measure provides incentives for private developers who build below-market-rate housing on the site of market-rate housing developments to fulfill their inclusionary housing obligation. SPUR was honored to help bring this measure to the voters and secure its passage at the ballot.



## The Future of Public Housing

In December 2012, the federal government notified the San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA) that it has been declared “troubled” — the lowest classification prior to placing an agency under federal receivership. SFHA owns and manages 5,400 public housing units and administers 10,000 Section 8 subsidies throughout San Francisco. In early 2013, the city took steps to begin a re-envisioning process to determine the future of the agency. SPUR participated in the process, along with residents, nonprofit service providers, affordable housing developers, local labor unions and private-sector development experts. We also began work on recommendations for improving San Francisco’s ability to provide high-quality housing to public housing residents. At the same time, we continued to support the redevelopment of SFHA’s most troubled housing developments through San Francisco’s HOPE SF program.

## A New Building Boom Emerges

More than 4,220 units of housing began construction in San Francisco in 2012 — following a year in which just 269 net units were added. After years of underbuilding, new housing and commercial construction began booming again in San Francisco. Years of work on neighborhood plans (including zoning changes in the Eastern Neighborhoods, the Market and Octavia Better Neighborhoods Plan and the Transit Center District Plan) are paying off as new construction moves forward in transit-served areas and in neighborhoods that support greater residential density. While neighborhood plans can take years to be adopted, they are critical for laying the groundwork for thoughtful growth. SPUR fought hard for all these plans, and we are very pleased to see their implementation now moving forward.



## Great Design Makes Great Neighborhoods

Through our Project Review Committee and our public programming, SPUR celebrates great design and works to support the practical application of urbanist principles. This year we reviewed great San Francisco projects such as 8 Octavia and Parcel P (both mixed-use housing projects on Octavia Boulevard), as well as 100 Van Ness, the transformation of an outdated office building into housing. We also worked with the San Francisco chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the San Francisco Housing Action Coalition to produce events exploring what makes projects work at different scales — how small, medium and large projects can all help enhance the urban fabric.



# Regional Planning

Our goal: Concentrate growth inside existing cities.

<http://www.spur.org/siliconvalleyindex>  
<http://www.spur.org/planbayarea>  
<http://www.spur.org/urbanwork>  
<http://www.spur.org/regionalplanning>



## The Silicon Valley Index

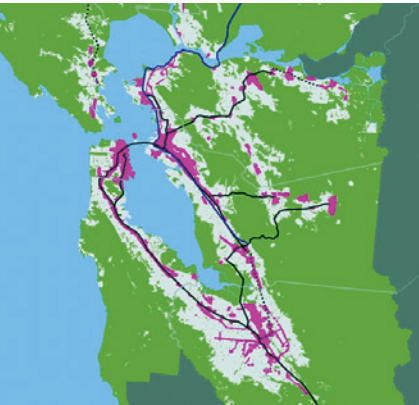
What are the economic benefits of governing the Bay Area as if it were a single economic region? This question formed the basis of a special analysis SPUR wrote for the annual *Index of Silicon Valley*. Every year since 1995, Joint Venture: Silicon Valley and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation have produced this data-rich indicators report on all aspects of Silicon Valley life, from jobs to housing production to graduation rates. SPUR's special analysis examined issues that cannot be sufficiently addressed at the local level: job sprawl, fiscal inequities, limited housing production, the fragmentation of

our region's 27 transit operators, climate change and sea level rise. SPUR presented the results at the annual State of the Valley conference, and we continue to use the work to inform our regional advocacy agenda.



## Planning for a Growing Bay Area

SPUR has long called for the Bay Area to produce a regional plan. California's 2008 land use and climate change law (SB 375) required regions to produce plans that align transportation spending with land use planning in ways that reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions. The Bay Area's version, called Plan Bay Area, was finalized in 2013 after three years of development. Throughout the process, SPUR weighed in on many aspects of the plan. We are pleased with the final plan, including key priorities such as directing nearly all growth into existing urbanized areas and investing 87 percent of transportation spending in existing systems. The plan and its environmental impact report also identify needed policy changes that SPUR supports: pricing regional roads in new ways, making changes to the carpool network, reducing the transit capital shortfall and identifying a replacement for California's defunct redevelopment agencies. No plan is perfect, but we stand by our strong endorsement of Plan Bay Area.



## The Urban Future of Work

Early in 2012, SPUR released a major report, *The Urban Future of Work*. In the still-recovering economy, we argued that bright spots existed for firms in the knowledge sector that embraced the benefits of urbanism, including proximity to suppliers, opportunities for collaboration and amenities for employees. This year we saw our recommendations borne out as more companies gravitated to urban locations: Rents skyrocketed and vacancies declined in many of the areas closest to regional transit, particularly near Caltrain stations on the peninsula and in key areas of San Francisco. Meanwhile, SPUR shifted to implementing the ideas in our report. We advocated for retrofitting corporate campuses by adding urban characteristics and amenities, and we supported the City of Mountain View's general plan update, which adopted some of these concepts. While we were unsuccessful in our call to mix land uses and allow housing in the North Bayshore area — home to Google, LinkedIn, Intuit and other major firms — we are pleased that the overall plan supported greater employment densities.

## Putting Jobs and Homes Near Transit

Despite the billions we've invested in transit, too few of the region's jobs and homes are convenient to public transportation. One of SPUR's key goals is to encourage more development near transit stations, particularly in urban centers. We continued this advocacy in 2012 by leading a series of walking and biking tours in San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose. We gave presentations on best practices in transit-oriented planning, with a particular focus on locating employment near rail stations. And we briefed the California High-Speed Rail Authority staff on the opportunity to use station-area development to help finance portions of the high-speed rail system.





# Sustainable Development

Our goal: Reduce our ecological footprint and prepare for climate change.

- <http://www.spur.org/futureproofwater>
- <http://www.spur.org/hetchhetchy>
- <http://www.spur.org/publicharvest>
- <http://www.spur.org/oceanbeach>



## Safeguarding Our Water for the 21st Century

This year we published a major policy report on the future of the Bay Area’s water supply: an in-depth review of one key way the region needs to prepare for climate change. More than two-thirds of the Bay Area’s water is imported from outside the region, which makes it vulnerable to periodic drought and the risk that an earthquake will damage the infrastructure that transports the water. Meanwhile, the Bay Area will add 2 million new people by 2040: growth that will require water. SPUR’s report *Future-Proof Water* evaluated whether we have the water we need to support this growth and recommended ways we can meet our needs most sustainably and reliably in the future.



## Better Access to Urban Agriculture

In 2012, SPUR kicked off its food systems and urban agriculture policy program by advocating to expand the use of public land for urban agriculture in San Francisco. The resulting report, *Public Harvest*, received extensive press coverage, including a front-page article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The recommendations in the report motivated policy reform during the summer, with the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously passing legislation that makes the city’s spending on urban agriculture more efficient and accountable, expands access to public land and increases resources for city gardeners and farmers. SPUR has actively tracked the progress of the legislation’s implementation and provided input to various agencies as the city establishes its new urban agriculture one-stop shop.

## Addressing Climate Change at Ocean Beach

In the spring of 2012, SPUR delivered the Ocean Beach Master Plan, a landmark interagency climate-adaptation plan for San Francisco’s ocean coast, where wastewater infrastructure and public beach access are threatened by persistent erosion. The plan presents an ambitious set of recommendations for coastal management, public access and environmental stewardship through 2050 and received a merit award from the Association of Environmental Professionals. This year SPUR was awarded \$1.2 million to implement the plan recommendations. We are now spearheading implementation studies on interagency coastal management, transportation analysis and open space planning.



## Big Win Hetch Hetchy Saved — Again

At the November 2012 ballot box, SPUR helped defeat yet another challenge to a keystone of the regional water system: the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission’s Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. Hetch Hetchy is the most important reservoir in a water system that serves 2.6 million people in the Bay Area, and its surroundings in Yosemite National Park yield water so clean that it doesn’t even have to be filtered. SPUR helped convince San Francisco voters that the proposal to eliminate Hetch Hetchy would decrease our water and energy security, cause new ecological damage while increasing climate change emissions and cost several billion dollars — for which the proposal did not identify either public or private sources.



# Transportation

Our goal: Give people more, and better, ways to get where they need to go.

<http://www.spur.org/tsp>

<http://www.spur.org/presidioparkway>

<http://www.spur.org/bartmetro>

<http://www.spur.org/transportation>



## Big Win First Presidio Parkway Segments Open

Had it not been for the work of a generation of SPUR advocates and city leaders, the new road through San Francisco’s Presidio might be an eight-lane elevated freeway. Instead, the replacement for Doyle Drive — parts of which opened this year — is integrated into the Presidio landscape and community. Following the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the San Francisco

Board of Supervisors created the Doyle Drive Task Force to address the damaged roadway. Michael Painter, a landscape architect and SPUR member, re-envisioned the Golden Gate Bridge on-ramp as a scenic parkway woven into the landscape. But that was only the start. Proponents of the plan worked for two decades to gain local control over the

design, compete for funding, fend off outdated traffic engineering standards and negotiate compromises among local constituencies. All along, SPUR leaders and partners provided thousands of hours of technical and advocacy work to ensure that the resulting road would befit a great city.



## Controlling Transit Costs

After several years of work, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) published the findings from its Transit Sustainability Project in 2012. Although the project began as an ambitious effort to reduce the operating costs of regional transit, most of the hard-hitting recommendations were removed from the report before publication. SPUR was active in the development of the recommendations, and when we saw that they were not as powerful as they needed to be, we advocated our own set of policy proposals, some of which were included in the final version. One of SPUR’s major recommendations is that MTC shift some of its transit funding to an incentive “bounty” that would pay transit operators based on performance, measured by their growth in ridership. We continue to support and watchdog MTC in its efforts to improve regional transit and implement this project.



## BART as an Urban Subway

BART was designed primarily as a commuter rail for suburban riders, but in recent years more passengers are using it as an urban subway-type service, especially between the high-traffic stations of San Francisco and the inner East Bay. To accommodate the increasing number of riders, BART’s Metro Vision and Operational Studies project has identified short-, medium- and long-term improvements to increase train frequency and direct service (particularly on nights and weekends) and grow significant capacity. Short-term improvements designed to facilitate 500,000 daily trips on BART by 2025 (up from 400,000 today) include train “turnbacks” (which allow some trains to turn around, rather than always traveling to the end of the line), improved train control systems, additional platform elevators, new train cars and new train storage facilities. SPUR has advocated for increased transit capacity into and out of San Francisco and supports this important set of improvements.

## Steady Progress for Rapid Transit

Almost 60 miles of high-capacity, high-frequency bus rapid transit (BRT) lines are planned for San Francisco, the East Bay and Santa Clara County. This year AC Transit’s San Leandro to Oakland BRT line received approvals that further clear the path for federal funding. Meanwhile, the Valley Transportation Authority’s Santa Clara/Alum Rock project and the San Francisco County Transportation Authority’s Van Ness project moved to their final design and construction stages. Unfortunately, key features that make BRT a great rapid transit solution — like dedicated bus-only lanes — are not included throughout these projects. SPUR will continue to push for higher standards for the BRT projects that are currently in the pipeline.





# SPUR Income and Expenses

2012–13  
fiscal year

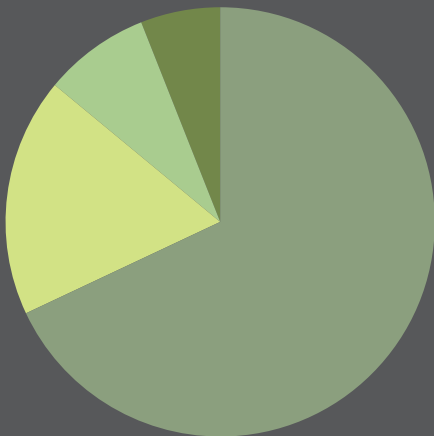
## Income

Special events	1,206,235	35%
Membership	1,201,656	35%
Grants	676,866	20%
Legacies & bequests	13,576	1%
Earned income	328,343	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,426,676</b>	<b>100%</b>



## Expenses

Policy, programs & publications	2,276,571	68%
Development	592,670	18%
Urban Center & exhibitions	276,232	8%
Administration	211,663	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,357,137</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Letter



## Cities: Problem and Solution

Welcome to SPUR’s annual report for 2012–2013. Over the past year, we have done a remarkable amount of work, and this report recaps some of our key accomplishments.

Our job at SPUR is to fix problems. We bring people together from across the political spectrum to come up with practical solutions to the most pressing urban issues.

We have some big challenges to grapple with here in the San Francisco Bay Area, from our astronomically high housing costs to our less-than-optimal transit systems.

But cities are no longer viewed primarily as sources of problems, the way they once were in the United States. Increasingly, more and more people understand that cities are in fact the solution. They enable us to live in a more resource-efficient way, minimizing our carbon footprint and our impact on the natural world. They nurture innovation and invention of all kinds. And they support a culture that embraces human diversity in all its forms.

SPUR is more than an organization. It’s a movement of people who believe in the potential of cities.

We are grateful to our amazing community of members, who help make this all possible. And we extend special thanks our funders, who believe in the power of this work.

We are living through a time of remarkable change in the lives of our cities, as new forms of living, working, communicating and getting around are being invented — as the cities of America are creating a way of life that is both prosperous and sustainable.

We have a lot of work to do together. But it’s a good time to be an urbanist.

**Gabriel Metcalf**  
Executive Director



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We apologize for any omissions or inaccuracies to this listing and will publish any corrections in a future issue of *The Urbanist*. This list represents gifts made between January 1 and December 31, 2012.

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Adhi Nagraj

Project Manager, BRIDGE Housing Corporation  
SPUR Board Member

What’s your favorite world city and why?

Johannesburg, South Africa. I worked there for seven years post-apartheid and saw Zulus and Afrikaners and Asian businessmen interacting after years of segregation. It is a vibrant, musical and emotional city.

As more and more people live in cities, what opportunities — and what challenges — do you foresee?

The influx of more people into cities has the potential to help solve, or exacerbate, the most pressing problem facing our country: rising income inequality. A pro-development, pro-transit urban agenda can facilitate greater economic mobility.

What can other urban regions learn from the Bay Area?

The Bay Area has a number of “rogue” industries that disrupt the traditional economy and help us maintain our

entrepreneurial edge. Other regions can learn from Popuphood, Off the Grid and City Slicker Farms.

What urban trends do you think will be significant in shaping the future of cities?

Urban regions of this country are trending towards economic specialization. But this leads to a homogenization of talent. While there are certain advantages to clustering industries, cities and regions that diversify will be in a better position to thrive during periods of volatility.

What current SPUR project are you most passionate about?

Expanding SPUR’s work to Oakland. There are so many organizations and city agencies doing great work in Oakland, and SPUR can support their work through economic development initiatives, pro-development housing policy and smart-growth advocacy.

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	Brian Fletcher	Frank Fudem *		Abby Goldware	Jaime Guerrero
				Gail Goldyne	David Guiang
* Deceased					



Madeline Chun

Attorney, Hanson Bridgett  
SPUR Board Member

What’s your favorite world city and why?

Aside from home (the People’s Republic of Berkeley), Washington, D.C., is my current favorite. It’s transit friendly and built to human scale, and it has vibrant neighborhoods, beautiful public spaces, lots of history and unexpected discoveries everywhere.

As more and more people live in cities, what opportunities — and what challenges — do you foresee?

How can our public institutions and infrastructure support the growth? How do we maintain fairness in the way resources are allocated? How shall we care for the elderly, educate the young, support the disabled and the poor? How do we maintain a sense of community? These challenges are complex and require thoughtful debate and a commitment to finding common ground.

What can other urban regions learn from the Bay Area?

The Bay Area is a microcosm of the globe. It is multicultural, multi-lingual and embraces its diversity. The power and creativity derived from the daily exchange of varied ideas and beliefs makes the Bay Area thrive.

What urban trends do you think will be significant in shaping the future of cities?

A more regional approach and regional priorities must be in the mix. There should be balance — think regionally, act locally.

What current SPUR project are you most passionate about?

SPUR is fearless in tackling large questions with insight and integrity. These qualities are key as we address transportation issues, which continue to be one of the most perplexing challenges for the Bay Area.

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				Herbert Jeong	Shruti Kasarekar



Kim Walesh

Economic Development Director, City of San Jose  
SPUR San Jose Advisory Board Member

What’s your favorite world city and why?

One definition of a world city is one where the best people from around the world want to live. That makes San Jose my favorite world city. 50 percent of our college-educated residents were born in another country — tops in the nation by far. Migrant business networks are re-shaping the world economy.

As more and more people live in cities, what opportunities — and what challenges — do you foresee?

Urbanism facilitates more social interaction, entrepreneurship and collaboration. It also makes it possible to live with a smaller carbon footprint. The challenges are in bringing the opportunities of urbanism to new constituencies: re-creating suburban environments with more urban amenities and densities; finding developers interested in doing high-quality urban form projects;

and getting more people to ride transit.

What can other urban regions learn from the Bay Area?

The value of preserving access to nature nearby. I can’t think of any other metro region with such incredible access to permanently protected open space.

What urban trends do you think will be significant in shaping the future of cities?

The growth of single households and households without kids as the new majority, including dramatic growth in the elderly population.

What current SPUR project are you most passionate about?

The San Jose Urban Design Task Force. We are sparking public conversation about how to create walkable places — what we call “mastering the art of proximity.”



Thor Kaslofsky	Joe Kirchofer	Byron & Elizabeth Kuth	Michael Learned	Andrew Likuski	Ti Lung
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David Friedman

Senior Principal and Chair, Board of Directors, Forell/Elsesser Engineers Inc. SPUR Board Vice Chair

**What’s your favorite world city and why?**  
I love to travel the world. I love eating in Paris. I love getting lost in Venice. But I love coming home to San Francisco. It’s still my favorite city of all.

**As more and more people live in cities, what opportunities — and what challenges — do you foresee?**  
I worry less about solving the infrastructure and development issues of urban densification and more about our cities providing a level playing field for all citizens. All communities need equal access to healthcare, education and economic mobility, along with safe and affordable housing. Social and environmental justice has to be central to our urban development.

**What can other urban regions learn from the Bay Area?**  
The Bay Area continues to demonstrate

solutions through collaborations between different constituencies and perspectives. The Bay Area in turn should always stay attuned to what we can learn from other urban regions.

**What urban trends do you think will be significant in shaping the future of cities?**  
Sustainability — although, I don’t think it’s a trend as much as a necessity in shaping our cities and insuring our future.

**What current SPUR project are you most passionate about?**  
Disaster resiliency, along with the initiative to work in all three of the Bay Area’s central cities. The signing of San Francisco’s soft-story retrofit legislation is a huge milestone, but it is only the first step in the city’s Earthquake Safety Implementation Program. And then we must expand resiliency efforts into San Jose and Oakland.

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Byron Rhett

Deputy Director, Planning and Development, Port of San Francisco SPUR Board Member

**What’s your favorite world city and why?**  
New York City. It has great neighborhoods, and with its extensive transit system and walkable streets, it’s very accessible. And now New York has the largest bike share program in the country with 6,000 bikes.

**As more and more people live in cities, what opportunities — and what challenges — do you foresee?**  
Transportation is both an opportunity and a challenge. With greater densities in our cities, there is the potential for increased ridership to support better and expanded transit service. But it’s challenging to find the upfront financial resources to make the required improvements.

**What can other urban regions learn from the Bay Area?**  
The Bay Area is making great strides in creating public access to its waterfront lands

while protecting water quality. The Heron’s Head Park expansion in the Bayview and the new Exploratorium near Fisherman’s Wharf are two examples of projects that bring residents and visitors in touch with the bay.

**What urban trends do you think will be significant in shaping the future of cities?**  
In cities around the country, people are returning to the urban core. Even distressed cities like Detroit are beginning to rebuild their downtowns. High-density mixed-use development is happening in major cities across the country.

**What current SPUR project are you most passionate about?**  
Addressing the challenge of climate change. At the Port of San Francisco, it’s an issue we deal with every day. SPUR is playing a leadership role in helping the port and the entire Bay Area prepare for sea level rise.



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Veronica Bell

Manager, Community and Government Affairs, Google  
SPUR Board Member

What’s your favorite world city and why?

If I had to choose one I would say London. It is an incredibly busy and culturally diverse city, but it maintains a sense of community and neighborhoods. Plus it’s easy to get everywhere.

As more and more people live in cities, what opportunities — and what challenges — do you foresee?

There is opportunity to move away from the car as the main form of transportation and create walkable cities. The drawback is that as the demand for housing increases, housing prices will increase with it. Mixed-use development will be important to solving some of these challenges.

What can other urban regions learn from the Bay Area?

The Bay Area is a diverse metropolitan

area — geographically, demographically, politically and culturally — and the resultant challenges for local governments are complex. Yet, Bay Area policymakers demonstrate a commitment to collaborative community planning and forward-thinking policy development that distinguishes our region.

What urban trends do you think will be significant in shaping the future of cities?

Dense housing and mixed-use development will be key to planning our future cities so that they are walkable and affordable.

What current SPUR project are you most passionate about?

Regional planning is high on my priority list. I live in San Francisco and work outside the city and would love to see a comprehensive, regional solution to public transit.

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What’s your favorite world city and why?

San Francisco because of its culture, food and diversity.

As more and more people live in cities, what opportunities — and what challenges — do you foresee?

Vibrant cities like those in the Bay Area create opportunities for collaboration, innovation and sustainability to make better products and to improve quality of life. Challenges include water supply, air quality and traffic congestion.

What can other urban regions learn from the Bay Area?

Time and time again, the Bay Area leads innovation, creative problem solving and collaboration in the areas of technology, art and culture.

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What urban trends do you think will be significant in shaping the future of cities?

Support for entrepreneurs who take risks. Cities that foresee the potential of innovative and sustainable companies and engage with visionaries and investors will grow and prosper as new jobs and industries provide economic opportunities.

What current SPUR project are you most passionate about?

*Future-Proof Water*, our look at where the Bay Area should get its water in the 21st century. This project provides great insight into the Bay Area’s current water systems and supplies, future threats to those supplies, future water demand and options for meeting that demand.



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Aidan Hughes

Principal, Arup  
SPUR Board Member

**What’s your favorite world city and why?**  
Hong Kong for its energy, Sydney for its beauty, and London for its permanence. And of course I love my home city, San Francisco.

**As more and more people live in cities, what opportunities — and what challenges — do you foresee?**  
As cities grow, they become the driving force behind positive change. We already see many cities taking the lead in addressing the major challenges of the day: climate change, resilience and resource management. The challenges are often most apparent in the governance structures that can be a barrier to innovation and change.

**What can other urban regions learn from the Bay Area?**  
Look at how the Bay Area accepts new ideas, builds on its diverse population and commits itself to innovation. These are the

attributes that give the Bay Area an edge in attracting talent and business and make it a welcoming place for people to live.

**What urban trends do you think will be significant in shaping the future of cities?**  
I think some of the more interesting trends are how technology is supporting new models of vehicle sharing and ownership. The advent of driverless vehicles also has the potential to be significant in all kinds of ways.

**What current SPUR project are you most passionate about?**  
Working with the Santa Clara Valley Transit Authority to improve South Bay transit operations and make the most of land uses around transit stations.

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Francesca Vietor

Environment Program Officer, San Francisco Foundation  
SPUR Board Member

**What’s your favorite world city and why?**  
I live in San Francisco. I work for the San Francisco Foundation. I serve on the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. My daughter attends the San Francisco Day School. Guess! If there were a better city in the world than San Francisco, I would live, work and raise my family there.

**As more and more people live in cities, what opportunities — and what challenges — do you foresee?**  
Our greatest challenge and our greatest opportunity will be how to live sustainably in our growing urban centers. Green infrastructure, equitable land use and building community resilience in the face of a changing climate are the urban design challenges we need to immediately address and implement.

**What can other urban regions learn from the Bay Area?**  
We have some of the most people- and environment-friendly policies and programs in the country. From local hire and community benefits to urban agriculture and renewable energy production, the Bay Area can’t be beat and has a lot to share.

**What urban trends do you think will be significant in shaping the future of cities?**  
Sustainability measures like local food production and distribution; water conservation, reuse and recycling; distributed, renewable and efficient energy; amd green infrastructure. Bike lanes everywhere and public transit for all.

**What current SPUR project are you most passionate about?**  
Where do I start? Climate resiliency. Urban agriculture. *Future-Proof Water.*





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